

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on May 21, 2004, and declared Final. Claims 1-23 are pending.

OBJECTION TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 21 are objected to for language informalities. Claim 1 has been canceled. Claim 21 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to the claims.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant is placing the application in condition for allowance by limiting the claims to the subject matter set forth in claims 6 and 21, the subject matter of which is noted by the Examiner as not taught or suggested by the prior art. Applicant is also addressing the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, by removing the term "non-segmented" in claims 6 et al., and by amending the term "non-segmented" to -- single, unitary -- in claim 21 as originally interpreted by the Examiner. It should be noted that claim 6 was originally determined to be allowable before the introduction of amendments relating to the "non-segmented" concept, and thus the removal of "non-segmented" from claim 6 should not constitute new matter or require the Examiner to search and/or further consider the prior art.

In addition, Applicant has canceled method claims 12-20 and reserves the right to prosecute the same in a continuing application.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 and §103

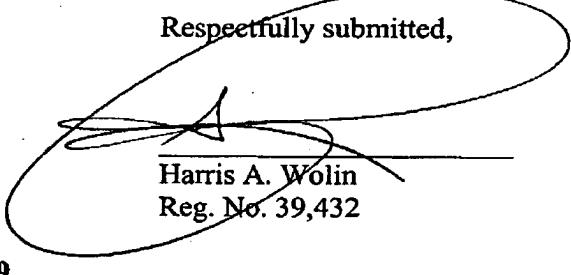
Claims 1-5, 10, 12-17, 19 and 23 remain rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Calabrese (USP 6,510,575), claims 11 and 20 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Calabrese '575, while claim 18 remains rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Calabrese '575. Applicant respectfully submits that such rejections are moot in view of the claim amendments set forth above.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 2-11 and 21-23, consisting of independent claims 6 and 21 and the claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 03-2455.

Respectfully submitted,



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